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INFO RUCNCAN/ALL CANADIAN POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS OTTAWA 000376

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O.: 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [CA](#)  
SUBJECT: CANADA REFOCUSES MULTILATERAL AID

REF: A. OTTAWA 134  
- B. OTTAWA 249

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Canadian International Development Agency plans to narrow its foreign aid priorities to focus primarily on increasing food security, stimulating sustainable economic growth, and securing the future of children and youth. The new strategy complements a February announcement (ref a) of a focus on 20 key aid recipients. Canada has met its G8 commitment of doubling aid to Africa and is on track to double its international assistance by 2010-2011. The announcement of the revised priorities did not come with any new money, and is unlikely to change the way Canada delivers assistance to Afghanistan and Haiti. End Summary.

#### FOCUS ON THREE PRIORITY THEMES

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¶2. (U) In a speech in Toronto on May 20, Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda announced a restructuring of Canada's multilateral foreign aid program. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will now focus its multilateral aid -- spent mostly through NGOs and accounting for C\$1.2 billion of its approximately C\$4 billion total annual aid budget -- on three priority themes:

- increasing food security;
- stimulating sustainable economic growth (including skills training and microcredit); and,
- securing the future of children and youth.

¶3. (U) Minister Oda described three key operating principles: greater efficiency (including untying all aid grants by 2012-13, with food aid already fully untied since April 2008); better focus; and, more accountability. She reiterated the government's decision since February to invest 80 pct of bilateral resources in 20 target recipients, and revealed that any change to this list would require Cabinet approval, reflecting the "long-lasting and strategic" nature of these priorities. She insisted that Canada had already met its G8 commitment of doubling aid to Africa (C\$2.1 billion in 2009) and is on track to double its international assistance (to C\$5 billion) by 2010-2011. She promised to transfer 15 pct of CIDA's headquarters staff to the field.

¶4. (u) Minister Oda also highlighted Canadian contributions of over C\$105 million to the Initiative to Save a Million Lives (children's health), of over C\$700 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and C\$200 million to the Stop Tuberculosis Partnership, as well as its pledge to eradicate polio in Afghanistan by the end of 2009 through a vigorous nationwide vaccination program.

#### "WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT" FOCUS ON OTHER ISSUES

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¶5. (U) Minister Oda promised that the "Government as a whole" would continue to focus on "complementary themes" of promoting democracy and ensuring security and stability, notably in Afghanistan, Haiti,

and "key countries in Africa and the Americas." She reiterated the government's commitment to create a "Democracy Promotion Agency" (ref b), without providing details. (Septel will describe the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's separate plans for democracy promotion, especially in the Americas.) She insisted that Canada's commitment to governance, the environment, and to equality between men and women remained firm, but underlined that that these goals will henceforth be "integrated" into programs rather than "hived off into silos of their own." She also confirmed that Canada would continue its efforts to promote freedom, human rights, and the rule of law, again without providing details.

16. (U) Comment: the announcement of the revised priorities did not come with any new money, and is unlikely to change the way Canada Qcome with any new money, and is unlikely to change the way Canada delivers assistance to Afghanistan and Haiti, which receive the bulk of Canada's foreign aid and where major programs are already in line with the new priority themes.  
BREESE